

Statement from Vancouver Public Schools

- VPS is very concerned about what happened to our bus driver on Thursday, May 9.
- The health and safety of our employees is a high priority.
- We are grateful that our driver was able to safely pull the bus over and call transportation for help.
- A principal from a nearby school and two district resource officers responded.
- The student, an elementary student who receives special education services, will be transported to school by parents until an employee can be assigned to ride with the student.

- A Step II SEIU grievance was settled last year and resulted in several changes:
 - After a student is removed from riding the bus, a re-engagement meeting takes place with the driver, student and building staff before the student is allowed back on the bus.
 - Student IEP (Individualized Education Plan) teams are consulted when special education student issues or concerns surface on a bus.

- Drivers go through regular safety trainings.
- Specialized training is offered for drivers on how to deal with students with challenging behaviors.
- The last training for all drivers was held in August 2018.
- Behavior specialists work with assigned drivers and students at specific schools every Monday.
- Training in student management was offered spring 2017; a committee for student management also was formed.
 - An outcome from the student management committee is an electronic referral process, which expedites responses and communication to and from schools and drivers.

- The district actively recruits new drivers; all new drivers start as substitutes.
 - The hiring process has been expedited and all associated fees for licensing are refunded within 90 days.
 - The goal is to have enough substitute bus drivers ride on buses as a second adult to manage student riders.
 - District leadership is working with SEIU leadership to allow flexibility in hiring additional support for drivers.

- School upgrades and construction (including new bleachers) are paid for with bond dollars, which by law can only be used for school and facility improvements.